

Резюме**Ожирение у детей – актуальная медико-социальная проблема в Румынии**

Исследование показывает, что у детей у которых родители страдают ожирением повышен риск развития ожирения. Родители создают для детей условия, которые могут способствовать развитию здорового пищевого поведения или могут способствовать избыточному весу.

Необходима профилактика с помощью образования общества и социальных изменений, а также нужно разработать методы, чтобы обеспечить успех этих усилий.

Ключевые слова: ожирение, питательный профиль, ребенок

Objective

Childhood obesity has reached crisis. A variety of factors, unique to modern western society, have led to the expanding prevalence of childhood obesity. Changes in specific eating patterns may explain the increase in adiposity among children. The aim of this study was to assess the association between body mass index (BMI) in children and their parents.

Materials and methods

From January 2014 to December 2014, a cross sectional study was conducted and a total of 234 children, between the ages of 4 and <18 years, with obesity and 234 adult persons were investigated. The control group consisted of 112 children (4 to <18 years of age) presenting to the pediatric clinic for a well-child visit and 112 adults. One questionnaire consisted of questions about personal characteristics and food intake habits was applied. Obesity was classified as a BMI of >95th percentile and severe obesity as a BMI of the 95th percentile for age and gender.

Results

60.68% of parents of children in the study group were overweight or obese, compared to 26.79% in the control group. Nutritional profile revealed that the protein, cereal and sugar intake was higher in the study group. Obese children have been consuming lower amounts of fats/oils, vegetables, grains, and increasing amounts of desserts, candy, beverages, and snacks. The frequency of fast food meals was 1,36 meals in the control group versus 3,65 meals in the study group. Due to accessibility, frequency number of fast-food meals is higher in children from urban versus rural areas.

Conclusions

The research indicates that children with obese parents have significantly elevated risks of deve-

loping obesity. Parents create environments for children that can foster the development of healthy eating behaviors or can promote overweight. Obesity prevention requires a education of society. Prevention through education and societal change is necessary, and methods to ensure success with these efforts must be developed.

THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES IN THE INTEGRATION OF EMIGRANTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA INTO THE EUROPEAN LABOUR MARKET

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Rezumat

Rolul competențelor profesionale în integrarea emigranților din R. Moldova pe piața europeană a muncii

Articolul prezintă rezultatele cercetării unei probleme socioeconomice contemporane, legate de competențele profesionale ale forței de muncă din Republica Moldova, privite prin prisma integrării emigranților pe piața europeană a muncii. Scopul cercetării a constat în identificarea relației dintre competențele profesionale ale emigranților și accelerarea procesului de integrare a acestora pe piața europeană a muncii. Problema ocupării forței de muncă, în special a emigranților moldoveni, ține inclusiv de nivelul scăzut de calificare, fapt ce periclitează șansele unei ocupări durabile și decente. Soluționarea problemei la acest capitol constă în formarea profesională și dezvoltarea abilităților forței de muncă, luând în considerație cererea pe piața forței de muncă în statele Uniunii Europene. Prezintă interes propunerea de a prelua exemplul occidental de validare a învățării informale și nonformale, cu scopul recunoașterii calificărilor deținute de emigranți, pentru a facilita integrarea acestora pe piața muncii.

Cuvinte-cheie: piața muncii, competențe profesionale, emigranți

Резюме

Роль профессиональных навыков в процессе интеграции эмигрантов из Р. Молдова на европейском рынке труда

В статье представлены результаты изучения социально-экономической проблемы, связанной с профессиональными навыками молдавских трудовых мигрантов, рассматриваемой через призму интеграции на европейском рынке труда. Проблема занятости связана с низким уровнем квалификации. Представляет интерес предложение перенять западную практику

информального и неформального обучения, для признания квалификаций эмигрантов в целях содействия интеграции на рынке труда ЕС.

Ключевые слова: рынок труда, профессиональные навыки, эмигранты

Introduction

The economic crisis has affected people differently depending on their level of education, with a stronger impact on those with low educational attainment. Low skilled population had experienced a shift down in its employment and earning patterns. Under these conditions it is indispensable to pay attention to this vulnerable category of population, the main solution is to reduce the amount of people who are unemployed by raising their level of training and develop their skills in job seeking. Thus, even services on employment mediation provide chances for increased professional mobility of emigrants and helps them in finding good jobs in receiving countries. Vocational training of emigrants is essential in providing skills that would ensure a better labour market entry, as well as more flexibility in changing occupations. Educational institutions, training centers, private or public economic agents and nongovernmental organizations should identify the real needs of the labour market and current trends on the European labour market and provide appropriate courses and trainings.

Recognition of competences and easier labour market inclusion of emigrants is facilitated by designing a network of institutions aimed at providing assistance at each step of the process, starting with the documentation required and beyond. The process of validation of non-formal and informal learning plays an important role in the development of labour force professional mobility. Experience gained by a series of countries can be useful in designing the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning in the Republic of Moldova.

Key competencies on European labour market and their recognition

Key competencies specified in European Union's initiatives regarding workforce employment target easier integration on labour market, being transferable between various fields of occupation and enhancing professional mobility of the workers. These competencies include:

- communication in the mother tongue,
- communication in foreign languages,
- mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology,
- digital competence,
- learning to learn,

- social and civic competences,
- sense of initiative and entrepreneurship,
- cultural awareness and expression.

Development of a knowledge-based society implies investments in human resource trainings, to encourage persons able to obtain a job or those who desire to keep it safe, to acquire new competencies and show a higher level of occupational mobility. Lifelong learning is important both for the employee, as well as for the employer, since it entails:

- a higher skilled labour force,
- motivated personnel,
- raise in quality standards.

The objectives of lifelong learning are as follows:

- to facilitate integration of individuals on labour market according to their professional aspirations and labour market needs,
- to increase labour force competitiveness,
- acquiring advanced knowledge, modern methods and procedures necessary to perform job tasks.

The systems of professional training should be adapted to various target groups, in various stages of life-cycle, to enable setting of equivalents between different levels of qualification and to facilitate workers' mobility.

When it comes to lifelong learning, we can speak of three forms of it: formal, informal and non-formal. Below we present a brief description of these three forms of learning [3].

Thus, **formal learning** is taking place in an organized and structured frame (education institution), implies explicit teaching projects, allocation of financial resources and stated objectives. It lasts for a determined period of time, involves certification of knowledge and competencies in relation to a series of clearly stated criteria regarding participation and evaluation.

Non-formal learning may have some stated objectives, however these do not follow a strict curriculum, adapting to the needs of target group, while the necessary resources are set based on groups features. Trainees take active part in the process of non-formal learning. The competencies and knowledge acquired are not automatically certified. A form of non-formal learning are on the job trainings, that allow organizations to update and increase the level of workers' competencies, as well as trainings organized by NGOs.

Informal learning isn't structured in relation to some objectives and doesn't have a specified duration. The intention of persons that is taking part at this kind of learning is not expressly shown. Knowledge and competencies acquired are not automatically certified.

We consider that all above-mentioned three types of learning are important, although they contribute in various ways to knowledge and competencies' development that can be later applied into professional activity.

Validation of learning results implies acknowledgment of an authorized body. The results are compared to a standard relevant to the level and field of qualification.

Certification of learning results is a process of formal confirmation, on the basis of documentation and evaluation of specific expertise, including the issue of a certificate of partial or incomplete qualification. Non-formal and informal learning certification is particularly important due to official recognition of acquired competencies in other ways than courses of education institutions. The perspectives are encouraging for migrants, because they often have only secondary education or secondary vocational education, however they possess broader abilities.

There is a series of professions that are regulated, for which the procedure of qualification's recognition is indispensable. Different recognition procedures apply across countries. These procedures were described by International Organization of Migration [4]. Systems may include regulation by a national or regional professional bodies (as in Australia or Canada), employer-based recognition processes (as in Sweden), the entire system may be coordinated by a single institution in charge of regulated professions (as in Denmark or Great Britain) or the process of recognition may be done automatically (as for example European Qualifications Framework/ Professional Qualifications Directive which applies to EU nationals and not third country nationals).

Assessment and recognition of formal learning is done differently from one country to another. Some approaches are based on the length of study (these take into account the quantitative dimension), while others consider the content (the qualitative dimension).

In the United Kingdom the distinctions between formal, informal and non-formal learning are blurred, while the transfer of credit between qualifications allows individuals to obtain recognition of their professional training, no matter the form or the field of education. The Federal Law on Recognition adopted in Germany allows partial recognition of non-regulated qualifications acquired abroad. In the case of rejection of the recognition of the foreign qualification, the law stipulates that an official positive statement will be provided to explain the knowledge, abilities and experience gained, thus supporting the consideration of qualifications on

the labour market, although de jure recognition is not granted.

Alternative recognition can include courses to cover the differences with the required qualification, these courses being offered by the competent authority. Australia is a leader in developing programmes of assistance designed for immigrant workers to help them obtain complete recognition of their qualifications and training a job.

Apart from partial competences' recognition, conditional recognition allows the candidate to start the desired activity under the condition that certain goals related to professional activity are reached within a specified period of time. This practice is spread in Canada, where candidates have the opportunity to show their abilities and knowledge during internships.

The Swedish Adult Education Initiative that took place in the period 1997-2002 has emphasized that validation involves a formalization of subjective evaluation of competence, considering qualifications requirements and personal skills. To raise the workforce mobility the Dutch Government introduced measures to stimulate training programmes and recognition of previous experience and acquired knowledge. Employees without a diploma or relevant studies that lost their jobs are encouraged to enroll to programmes to receive validation of their knowledge obtained through non-formal and informal learning. In case of Denmark associations from industrial branches, as well as organizations of employers have unified their efforts to create Training and Development Funds to support financially adult educational initiatives. The procedures of non-formal and informal learning validation are established by regional institutions for vocational training, while employer involvement ensures that evaluation is adjusted to real needs of labour market.

The top 5 jobs for 2013 (information available on 01.01.2014 from European Job Mobility Bulletin) in Europe comprise the following:

- Finance and sales associate professionals (40400 posts),
- Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (27500 posts),
- Personal care and related workers (24640 posts),
- Electrical and electronic equipment mechanics and fitters (23940 posts),
- Shop salespersons and demonstrators (22360 posts).

We can see that most of these occupations entail advanced knowledge of foreign languages by emigrants willing to work in these jobs, as well as

abilities to communicate with clients and technical knowledge, abilities of financial analysis, of a providing services unit etc, i.e. those abilities that can be developed during formal studies, at additional courses or directly from work practice.

Let's have a look on top 5 jobs proposed to unemployed in various countries of Europe (see table).

"Top 5" EURES jobs by country (EURES portal 1st January 2014), absolute number of vacant posts

Country ¹	"Top 5" jobs by country
Austria	1. Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (5,950) 2. Shop salespersons and demonstrators (2,000) 3. Machinery mechanics and fitters (1,870) 4. Physical and engineering science technicians (1,860) 5. Finance and sales associate professionals (1,470)
Denmark	1. Special education teaching professionals (480) 2. Client information clerks (340) 3. Health professionals (310) 4. Legal professionals (265) 5. Pre-primary education teaching associate professionals (260)
Cyprus	1. Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (370) 2. Agricultural, fishery and related labourers (100) 3. Domestic and related helpers, cleaners and launderers (90) <i>Places number 4 and 5 cannot be identified due to the low numbers of job vacancies.</i>
Spain	1. Pre-primary education teaching associate professionals (2,220) 2. Health professionals (500) 3. Client information clerks (360) 4. Other teaching associate professionals (200) 5. Finance and sales associate professionals (160)
Czech Republic	1. Finance and sales associate professionals (2,250) 2. Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (1,570) 3. Protective services workers (1,550) 4. Motor vehicle drivers (1,490) 5. Physical and engineering science technicians (1,200)
Finland	1. Finance and sales associate professionals (3,520) 2. Building caretakers, window and related cleaners (1,390) 3. Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (1,380) 4. Shop salespersons and demonstrators (1,220) 5. Personal care and related workers (970)
Germany	1. Finance and sales associate professionals (23,120) 2. Electrical and electronic equipment mechanics and fitters (20,070) 3. Machinery mechanics and fitters (14,920) 4. Architects, engineers and related professionals (14,850) 5. Building finishers and related trades workers (12,760)

France	1. Finance and sales associate professionals (2,430) 2. Production and operations department managers (2,350) 3. Physical and engineering science technicians (1,980) 4. Other department managers (1,820) 5. Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (1,555)
Portugal	1. Textile, garment and related trade workers (490) 2. Finance and sales associate professionals (460) 3. Market-oriented crop and animal producers (280) 4. Housekeeping and restaurant services workers (340) 5. Client information clerks (185)
Sweden	1. Personal care and related workers (10,060) 2. Nursing and midwifery associate professionals (4,240) 3. Shop salespersons and demonstrators (2,630) 4. Finance and sales associate professionals (2,600) 5. Other personal services workers (2,395)
Slovakia	1. Metal moulders, welders, sheet-metal workers, structural-metal preparers, and related trades workers (110) 2. Blacksmiths, tool-makers and related trades workers (105) 3. Locomotive engine drivers and related workers (100) <i>Places number 4 and 5 cannot be identified due to the low numbers of job vacancies.</i>
United Kingdom	1. Other department managers (424,300) 2. Architects, engineers and related professionals (105,940) 3. Food processing and related trades workers (74,740) 4. Finance and sales associate professionals (63,880) 5. Computing professionals (50,400)
Slovenia	1. Metal moulders, welders, sheet-metal workers, structural-metal preparers (100) 2. Finance and sales associate professionals (90) 3. Building finishers and related trades workers (80) <i>Places number 4 and 5 cannot be identified due to the low numbers of job vacancies.</i>

Source: European Commission, 2014. *European Job Mobility Bulletin*. Issue no. 11 / February 2014. [online] Available at: < <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=955>>

Note: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Greece, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta and Romania were not included due to the insignificant number of vacancies involved.

Features of workforce migration from the Republic of Moldova

According to the training level of emigrants from the Republic of Moldova reported to work abroad the majority group has secondary vocational education, closely followed by the group with secondary education (see figure).

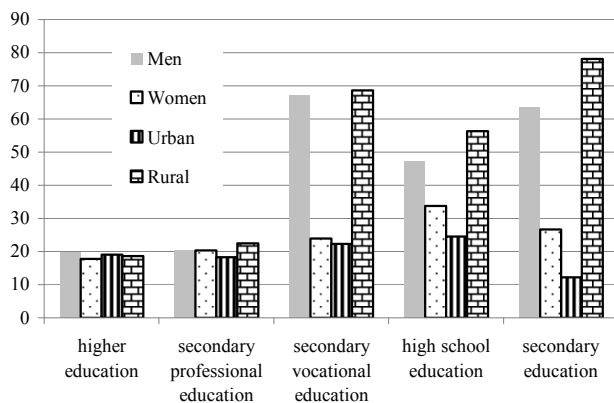
Analizing emigrants' distribution according to their level of education, sex and country of destina-

tion we can underline two numerous groups, both formed of emigrants to Russian Federation, comprising men with secondary vocational education (56,7 thousand persons) and women with high school education (17,5 thousand persons).

In the meantime, among emigrants from rural area prevails the group with secondary education, while among emigrants from urban area most numerous is the group of people with high school education.

From the analysis of migrants distribution on fields of vocational training that persons had before leaving abroad it results that men migrants had mainly qualification in the field of engineering (47%) and services approximately 37%), the rest of the occupations are met in less than 10% of the cases.

Distribution of emigrants who work abroad according to the level of education, sex and geographic area (year 2014)



Source: National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. *Labour Force in the Republic of Moldova. Employment and Unemployment*. Edition 2015.

Women migrants are more often qualified in engineering as well, (around a quarter), the same proportion is being held by women with qualifications in social sciences, business and law. Next places are held by services, education and health care.

According to the report on workforce migration issued by National Bureau of Statistics a overwhelming majority of emigrants (95%) haven't attended any training with perspective to prepare for living abroad. Mainly young people (70% of all emigrants that worked abroad) were trained. We emphasize that one of the most important conditions for a successful integration in the labour field abroad is speaking the language of the host country, the fact attested at a share of 86% of men and 63% of women; however 7% of men and 17% of women emigrants understood, but didn't speak the language of the

country of destination, while 6% of men and 17% of women didn't know at all the foreign language.

Lifelong learning in the Republic of Moldova

The connection of the local labor market to European trends, the development of labour force and employment represent strategic goals for the Republic of Moldova in order to create a true knowledge-based society and achieve sustainable development. The "knowledge triangle" of education-research-innovation is considered basic strategy in ensuring the country's economic growth and welfare, so developing lifelong learning is a priority to flexible labor force and occupational safety development. In the context of the knowledge-based society values, the full potential of labor force can be achieved through continuous effective and innovative learning.

Training in Moldova is conducted through institutions of secondary vocational and higher education (including part time studies), training courses organized by the National Agency for Employment, various courses organized by private companies and public organizations that provide vocational training in the secretariat, management, business development, computer classes, foreign language, accounting etc.

According to National Employment Agency of Moldova in 2013 a number of 2568 people benefited from professional training, of whom trained in state schools were 775 people, and trained at private institutions were 1793 people. Among those, only 7.5% attended trainings for professional development, while the rest of unemployed attended courses of professional formation and requalification.

Among educational institutions contracted by employment agencies for centralized training include:

- in Chisinau: Vocational School no. 7, Vocational School no. 8, Vocational School no. 9, Training Centre *Inmacom-Didactic*, Ltd. *Island of Hope*, Technological College, Training and Production;
- in Balti: Vocational School no. 1 from Balti, Vocational School no. 5 from Balti, College of Light Industry from Balti, Training and Production Centre subsidiary from Balti, Ltd. *Miracle*;
- in Cahul: Training and Production Center subsidiary from Cahul, Vocational School no. 1 from Cahul, Small Business School from Cahul, Teaching, Production and Social Rehabilitation of Disabled and Orphans Corporation *Mariana*.

Most professions where training is done in these institutions are: electrician, gas welder, automotive mechanic, plasterer, painter, carpenter, computer operator, tailor-sewer, cook-baker,

waiter-barman, secretary, accountant, hairdresser, manicurist-pedicurist, masseur, etc. Although these professions are required in the labor market, they are paid less and opportunities for advancement do not exist (except for the accounting profession), so motivation to develop skills may be very low or missing. In this case, talking about sustainable development of the workforce we tend to emphasize that the opportunities of potential emigrants to integrate in the European labor market are closely correlated with the development of additional skills, which will be mentioned below.

Thus, from the top 5 most demanded professions in the European labor market we see that four occupations requires a good relationship with customers. Development of specific skills such as business communication, ability to persuade customers, responsiveness to their wishes, adaptiveness to the individual needs of customers can be achieved through informal learning in everyday life of the individual, but importance of these skills is enormous. In these cases, knowledge of the language of the country of destination is imperative. Also an important point is the development of management skills, especially, taking into account, that most migrants are stimulated through various grant programs to invest money in business. Areas such as strategic development, operational management, motivating human resources, corporate finance, marketing and sales, project management are the foundation for a successful launch in business, thus the mentioned abilities can successfully contribute to the self-employment of those categories of emigrants who return home and want to start a business or try to start a business in the host country.

We consider necessary, as well, the professional development of training and mediation service providers; they should closely monitor trends in new techniques for job search assistance, develop and maintain appropriate databases etc. Specialists within the employment agencies can receive real-time information on the labor market to maximize the variety of employment opportunities for graduates of training courses. Many workers have skills that can be transferred from the previous occupation to the new one. In other cases, the skills developed in a training program may be required by employers in other fields than expected. Modern trends in the labor market have created the need for specialists in the employment agencies to develop their knowledge on these opportunities and to assist persons in job search.

In the Republic of Moldova, the organization of training courses for unemployed is mainly the responsibility of state agencies. Funding required for these courses is an important aspect that should be taken into account, since training of workers is an investment that brings long-term benefits. The state's

role in this situation is to determine and foster the training of employees in firms. One of the solutions proposed in literature is the decentralization of the system of professional training of the population by providing a range of responsibilities to local authorities. Examples are brought Western European countries, where training and qualification courses are funded by local taxes, the state's role is to ensure a balanced distribution between different territorial areas of tax revenues. A number of countries have introduced tax incentives for organizations that have spent financial resources to increase the level of training of employees. The non-discriminatory access to employment and training of people is an important issue here. Considering the low budgetary financial resources, eligibility to these courses becomes a crucial aspect, since the beneficiaries of these funds are unemployed persons that have higher chances to find a job.

Developing mechanisms to ensure a broader access of the population to vocational training is one of the objectives of labor market management. According to the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Moldova 2020: "Human capital is one of the few resources that can offer the Republic of Moldova a comparative advantage. However, if labor is not specialized in the areas requested by employers, human capital remains an untapped resource." As it is stated in the Strategy, education expenditures in Moldova amount for 9.2% of GDP, which is 3.7% more than the European average, but these costs do not produce the expected economic and social impacts.

Also, among the measures to help increase flexibility and efficiency of training systems can be mentioned:

- development and implementation of state programs and training standards,
- development of the state certification and testing of operators offering training,
- transfer of training institutions on partial financing or completely on their own financing.

An efficient operation of the labor market involves improving the employability of low-skilled and economically disadvantaged population. In this context, it is necessary to validate knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal or informal learning. Recognition of this type of learning is an essential process in order to increase employment opportunities in the labor market. This is based on the European Qualifications Framework on lifelong learning and the National Qualifications Framework. Certificates issued by authorized institutions in qualifications' recognition produce the same effects as other ways of evaluation and certification of the formal education system. The Republic of

Moldova has undertaken an attempt to develop a draft of the Government decision on the approval of Concept of the National System of non-formal and informal learning validation.

Conclusions

Raising the professional qualification is an imperative for the nation as a whole, boosting external competitiveness, constituting a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable development. This objectives can be achieved through acknowledgment and development of lifelong learning, enhanced by the non-formal and informal learning validation.

A perspective on the most frequently required jobs in EU in comparison to vacancies from the Republic of Moldova helps identifying skills and competences necessary to be developed by potential emigrants. We consider that there is a need for a change in the pattern of vocational formation of unemployed and workforce, as a whole, because modern trends on the labour market impose a shift in knowledge and skills.

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